DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 253 610 UD 024 052

TITLE Affirmative Action Plan. Access, Equity, Opportunity. Fifth Edition.
INSTITUTION New York State Education Dept., Albany.
PUB DATE 84
NOTE 32p.
PUB TYPE Guides - General (050) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Affirmative Action; Disabilities; *Employment Practices; *Equal Opportunities (Jobs); Grievance Procedures; Information Dissemination; Minority Groups; *Personnel Policy; Position Papers; Program Evaluation; Program Implementation; *Public Policy; Racial Discrimination; Recruitment; Sex Discrimination; Sexual Harassment; Social Discrimination; Training Methods; Veterans
IDENTIFIERS *New York State Education Department

ABSTRACT

The Affirmative Action Plan of the New York State Education Department is described in this document. First, a policy statement is provided by the New York State Education Department, committing the Department to the development of: (1) programmatic approaches to the elimination of all unjust exclusionary employment practices, policies, and consequences; (2) educational and training programs for all employees, with due emphasis on upgrading minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and Vietnam Veterans; (3) personnel practices, policies, and career ladders to assist and encourage upward mobility of employees restricted to lower levels; and (4) mechanisms for swift and judicious resolution of problems of human rights discrimination consistent with departmental policy, the Governor's executive orders, and other applicable legal statutes. This statement is followed by details of: (1) plans to disseminate the affirmative action plan and program both internally and externally; (2) implementation responsibilities on the part of various State Department of Education offices and officers; (3) goals and timetables; (4) Vietnam Veteran policies; (5) policy toward persons with disabilities; (6) sexual harassment policy; (7) discrimination complaint procedure; (8) equal opportunity/affirmative action training; and (9) program evaluation and reporting. (RDN)

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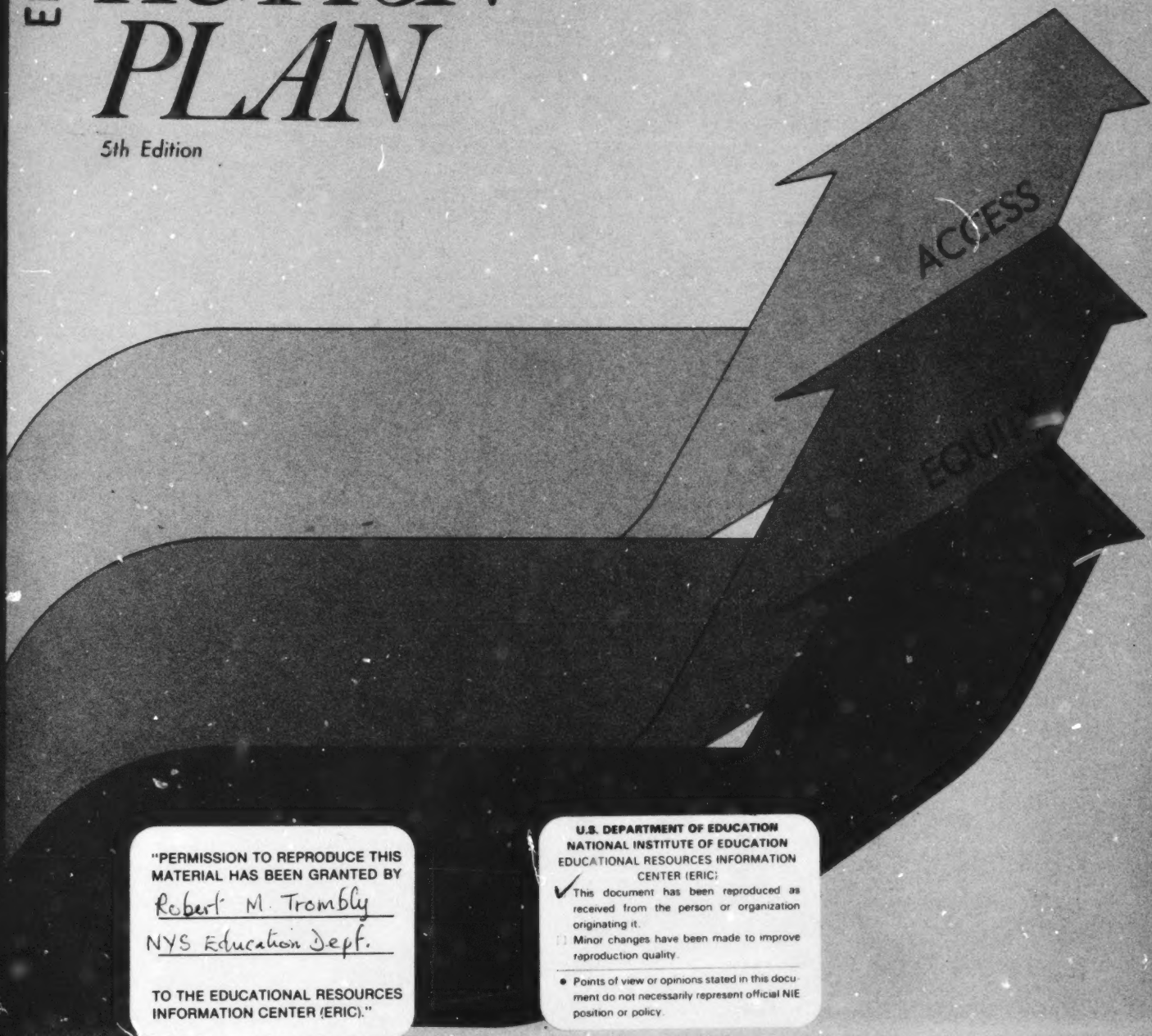
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN

5th Edition



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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN

FIFTH EDITION

The State Education Department does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, religion, creed, disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, race, or sex in the educational programs and activities which it operates. Inquiries concerning this policy of equal opportunity and affirmative action should be referred to the Department's Affirmative Action Officer, Education Building, Albany, NY 12234. Phone (518) 473-1265.

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PART I

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the New York State Education Department to provide equal employment opportunity to all people without regard to race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, disability, Vietnam Era Veteran status or other factors not related to the ability to do the job. As Commissioner of Education, I am personally committed to assuring that the Education Department will act affirmatively to develop avenues of entry and mobility for minorities, women, individuals having disabilities, and Vietnam Era Veterans through the following activities:

—Development of programmatic approaches to the **elimination of all unjust** exclusionary employment practices, policies and consequences;

—Development of **educational and training programs** for all employees, with due emphasis on our goal of upgrading minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and Vietnam Era Veterans;

—Development of personnel practices, policies, and career ladders to assist and encourage **upward mobility** of employees restricted to lower levels;

—Development of mechanisms for swift and **judicious resolution of problems** of human rights discrimination consistent with our policy, the Governor's executive orders, and other applicable legal statutes.

To implement this policy, we have designed a plan which conforms with all relevant Federal and State nondiscrimination and affirmative action regulations including, but not limited to: the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Act of 1974, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, the New York State Human Rights Law and Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 6. The plan applies equally to all job classifications, titles, and types of appointments under the Education Department's jurisdiction. It governs all the Education Department's employment policies, practices and actions including but not necessarily limited to: recruitment, employment, disciplinary actions, rate of pay, or other compensation, advancement, reclassification, reallocation, promotion, demotion, and all employee benefits. Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals having disabilities.

To assist me in my responsibility as chief executive officer for an effective affirmative action program, I have appointed a full-time Affirmative Action Officer, Doris Jamison, to be responsible for day-to-day implementation of necessary programs and policies as outlined in the plan, which will be available in the Affirmative Action Office. I will see that the Affirmative Action Office is provided with all resources necessary for the execution of its program responsibilities. Moreover, all managers, supervisors, and employees must make consistently diligent efforts to implement this policy in day-to-day program and employment decisions.

The mission of the New York State Education Department is to provide the broadest range of educational opportunities, programs and services to every State resident and to foster the use of education resources in the State's cultural, scientific and economic development. Affirmative Action considerations will be an integral part of all activities performed in the furtherance of our mission and in meeting our responsibilities to the State's citizens.

GORDON M. AMBACH
Commissioner of Education
April 1, 1984

PART II

Dissemination of Policy

The Education Department will undertake the activities listed below to disseminate its Affirmative Action Plan and Program, both internally and externally.

A. Internal

1. A copy of the Affirmative Action Policy Statement will be posted on each floor of every building and facility on at least one bulletin board that is conspicuous and accessible to employees and, to the extent possible, to the public.

2. A copy of the Affirmative Action Plan will be distributed to each employee and will be referenced in policy and/or personnel manuals.

3. Protected class* employees will be represented in any Department brochures, publications, manuals, reports and advertisements which depict the Department work force.

4. Department newsletters will include descriptions of the Affirmative Action Policy and Plan, and will reinforce the Department's commitment to equal employment opportunity and Affirmative Action through periodic updates.

5. Meetings will be scheduled at least annually with managers and supervisors from all areas to review the Affirmative Action Plan, to discuss program goals and objectives, and to explain management responsibilities for implementation.

6. Union officials will be informed of the Department's Affirmative Action Policy and their cooperation will be sought.

* Protected class employees for purposes of Affirmative Action, are those who are minority representatives (Black, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, Native American), women, Vietnam era veterans, or disabled individuals.

B. External

1. The Affirmative Action Plan will be made available to the public upon requests to the Affirmative Action Office or the Division of Personnel.

2. The Affirmative Action Policy will be made known to recruitment sources through oral and written communication, including methods that are accessible to individuals having disabilities.

3. The Affirmative Action Policy will be made known to organizations, colleges and community groups interested in encouraging equal employment opportunities for minorities, women, individuals having disabilities, and Vietnam Era Veterans.

4. All applicants will be informed of the Department's Affirmative Action Policy.

5. All vendors and suppliers with whom the Department conducts business will be notified of the Affirmative Action Policy and their cooperation will be sought.

6. The Department will ensure that purchase orders indicate that the Department is an Equal Opportunity/ Affirmative Action employer.

C. Feedback

Procedures will be utilized to obtain information from employees, advocacy groups and consumers of the Department's services about the efficacy of and the need to improve the Affirmative Action Program. These may include:

—Interviewing protected class employees
—Surveying employees, outside agencies, and advocacy groups
—Obtaining evaluations from affirmative action training program participants.

PART III

Implementation Responsibilities

A. Commissioner of Education

Consistent with applicable laws, rules and regulations, and Executive Orders, ultimate responsibility for the achievement of equal opportunity in the Education Department through the use of the Affirmative Action Plan and other means lies with the Commissioner of Education.

B. Affirmative Action Officer

The Commissioner of Education has delegated day-to-day programmatic responsibility for the agency's Affirmative Action Program to the Affirmative Action Officer, who reports directly to the Commissioner of Education.

The Affirmative Action Office's responsibilities focus on developing, coordinating the implementation of, and monitoring the Education Department's Affirmative Action Program. In addition to traditional affirmative action functions, the Department's Affirmative Action Office is designated to serve as Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator for purposes of employment. The Office, in conjunction with the Division of Education Business Management Services, administers a program for Minority and Women's Business Development.

The duties of the Affirmative Action Officer include, but are not limited to, the following:

—planning, developing, coordinating, implementing and monitoring the Department's Affirmative Action Program

—working with the Personnel Office in the recruitment and examination program, including:

participating in examination planning conferences

reviewing proposed minimum qualifications for all positions

maintaining resume files

—reviewing, monitoring and making recommendations on Department personnel policies

—consulting, developing and participating in Affirmative Action training programs

—assuring that reasonable accommodations are provided to all known qualified disabled applicants and employees

—researching, compiling and analyzing data related to the representation of protected class employees in the Department's work force

—participating in conferences, meetings, forums, discussion groups, panels and seminars concerned with Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity

—keeping abreast of and interpreting laws, rules, regulations and court decisions impacting on the Affirmative Action Program

—coordinating Affirmative Action activities in the Department's central, regional and institutional offices and ensuring that all locations are in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

—developing employment goals with specific and special emphasis on programs for pre-entry, entry and promotional titles

—developing and implementing systems for monitoring and attaining such goals

—developing an internal discrimination complaint procedure

—investigating and resolving complaints of discrimination

—informing complainants of rights and external avenues of redress.

B.1. Liaison With Special Groups

The Affirmative Action Office provides technical assistance to other areas of the Department concerned with equity and civil rights. It is an ex officio member of various commissioner's advisory committees including the Advisory Council and Task Force on Equal Opportunity for Women, the Task Force on Minority Access to the Licensed Professions, the Task Force on Management Development and Training, and the Management/Confidential Employees Performance Evaluations Appeals Board. The Affirmative Action Officer regularly meets with individual staff members, groups of employees and outside lay or advocacy groups, including employee organization representatives, to advance the objectives of the Department's Affirmative Action Program, and serves as the representative to the New York State Affirmative Action Advisory Council.

C. Responsibilities of Office of Personnel and Labor Relations

The Personnel Officer shall establish and maintain a close working relationship with the Affirmative Action Officer in the implementation of the Department's human resource management program. (See Part IV)

Responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

—maintaining all personnel records in a manner consistent with applicable laws and regulations, as well as the requirements of the Affirmative Action Plan

—developing and maintaining all personnel directives in a manner that is consistent with applicable laws and regulations, and the Affirmative Action Plan

—continuously reviewing the jurisdictional classification system, procedures, benefit packages, leave policies, training and career development programs and other employment practices to assure that all such practices conform with current legal and regulatory requirements, and the Affirmative Action Plan

—implementing the approved affirmative recruitment plan to enable all protected class individuals to have equal access to the employment opportunities available.

D. Responsibilities of Other Agency Offices/Divisions

The Executive Staff shall provide organizational linkages and hold regular meetings with the Affirmative Action Officer to ensure that the Affirmative Action Officer is informed of the activities of these offices and has an opportunity to evaluate the Affirmative Action impact of these activities. These offices shall also ensure that Affirmative Action goals and objectives are met within the respective program areas.

E. Responsibilities of Managers and Supervisors

The obligations of managers and supervisors include, but are not limited to:

—adhering to departmental policies designed to eliminate discriminatory practices (e.g., employment interviewing, appointment monitoring, adding to the Affirmative Action Resource file, etc.)

—actively recruiting and/or assisting in recruiting members of protected classes for vacancies

—providing leadership and setting a positive example to subordinate staff in assuring applicants/employees are provided equal opportunity for appointment, promotion, transfer, training, assignments, etc., regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, marital status or disability

—seeking out businesses owned by minorities and women, as sources of goods and services

—working cooperatively with the Affirmative Action Officer, assisting in the identification of problem areas and the establishment and active pursuit of numerical and programmatic goals and timetables

—providing staff appointed to Affirmative Action Committees with the time and support necessary to assure their full participation in Committee activities

—maintaining an active information sharing network with Affirmative Action staff, raising key issues and providing accurate and timely reports as required for Affirmative Action purposes

—including in staff performance evaluations an assessment of each individual's knowledge, awareness and sensitivity to the department's Affirmative Action Plan and Program

—conducting periodic evaluations of targeted program areas to assure equal treatment of protected class service consumers

—participating in Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity training provided to supervisory and management personnel.

E.1. Individual Employee Responsibilities

Every employee of the State Education Department, whether manager or not, is responsible for implementing the affirmative action program by:

—reading this plan thoroughly

—learning more about equal employment

—treating coworkers with courtesy and encouragement, especially those who may be working in non-traditional jobs

—eliminating derogatory terms, comments or jokes related to personal characteristics (such as sex, race, national origin, religion, age) from conversations in the workplace

—working cooperatively with the Affirmative Action Office in complaint investigations, training programs, and other activities as requested.

F. Agency Affirmative Action Committee Responsibilities

To assist with evaluating the effectiveness of the program, an Affirmative Action Advisory Committee serves as an advisory group to the Commissioner of Education through the Affirmative Action Officer. Each of the ten members of the group is nominated by the Deputy Commissioners and confirmed by the Commissioner of Education. The composition of this group of employees seeks to represent various points of view by virtue of protected class membership, occupational category, and program area. Training will be provided to committee members to increase their effectiveness.

The committee will meet a minimum of four times per year or more often as needed. Among its duties will be to conduct periodic reviews of the plan, to identify resources and concerns, and to review recommendations for changes. Based on such reviews, it will recommend strategies for improving program implementation. It will assist in dissemination of information and in clarification of the program to managers, staff, and to interested community groups. It will also assist in identifying and expanding recruitment sources to enable the Department to attract a broader pool of applicants.

It should be noted that there are a number of other Department advisory committees through which protected class viewpoints are also made known to the Commissioner of Education. These include the Commissioner's Advisory Councils on Equal Opportunity for Women, on Vocational Rehabilitation, on Bilingual Education, and on Interfaith Education.

PART IV

Goals and Timetables

The intent of the Department under Affirmative Action is to give deliberate consideration to increasing the numbers of qualified minority, disabled, female, and Vietnam Era veteran representatives at every level of employment throughout the Department. The establishment of goals is done to help define expectations and to measure our progress toward fulfilling those expectations.

The distinction between goals and quotas can be elusive, and it is critical to approach this issue with sensitivity and common sense. The ability of a candidate to perform successfully on the job continues to be the principal criterion of selection. A good faith effort, coupled with common sense, and selection decisions reached in strict accordance to job-related factors should help meet our goals, while at the same time identifying those best qualified for employment.

As a general rule, affirmative action goals are determined by comparing the percentage of protected class incumbents employed by the agency with the estimated percentage of those in the potential labor force possessing bona fide qualifications for appointment. The goals attempt to arrive at a work force that is consistent with the composition of the labor force. Timetables for achieving these goals must take into consideration projected turnover and accession rates of personnel. Because of so many uncertainties concerning public sector employment, these goals are reviewed and updated annually.

Targeted Title Projects

After establishing goals and timetables for eliminating the underutilization of protected class groups within each Federal Occupational Category, the Education Department will target titles for special affirmative action treatment and consideration as a major strategy in the Department's goal attainment program, in conformance with Civil Service guidelines. Development and implementation of Targeted Title Projects will follow the schedule to be established by the Department of Civil Service in the near future.

Personnel Policies and Practices Related to Affirmative Action

All personnel policies and practices of the State Education Department are considered to be related to affirmative action. Our purpose is to assure that equal employment opportunity is available to every applicant and employee from the very beginning of the employment process, when position descriptions are first formulated, through the end of that process, when a diversely representative work force is working in harmony to accomplish the educational, cultural, and occupational objectives which are this Department's responsibility.

On a continuing basis, we are committed to identifying and overcoming problem areas in employment practices which have an adverse impact on protected class individuals. This ongoing review includes but is not limited to the following:

- —position descriptions
- —examinations
- —posting openings
- —recruitment
- —search committees
- —application
- —interviews
- —selection
- —training for career advancement
- —special assignments
- —performance evaluations
- —promotion
- —transfer
- —reassignment
- —relocation
- —layoff and recall
- —granting leaves
- —grievances
- —disciplinary action
- —termination
- —Civil Service regulations
- —Division of Budget procedures affecting personnel practices

Managers, personnel specialists, and other employees given authority to hire or promote, have special responsibilities to see that affirmative action principles and practices are incorporated in their activities, and to actively communicate with the Affirmative Action Officer in order to develop strategies for overcoming adverse impact of personnel policies and practices and for fostering opportunities for protected class persons. The following sections explain the minimum expectations with regard to various employment practices. The plan section on individuals having disabilities explains additional needs of that protected class, such as reasonable accommodations.

Unless otherwise specified, the timetable for implementation is April 1, 1984 - - Ongoing.

Civil Service Rules and Regulations

Traditional interpretations and applications of Civil Service laws, rules and regulations, instead of producing a representative work force, may result in and perpetuate the denial of employment opportunities to protected class members in New York State Government Service. To avoid this problem, effective immediately and on an ongoing basis, the Education Department, with the cooperation, advice and guidance of Civil Service, shall seek to interpret and utilize existing statutes, regulations and policies so as to increase the representation of protected class groups and meet established goals and timetables pursuant to Executive Order 6. Civil Service will assist this Department in the exploration and affirmative use of such mechanisms as 70.4 transfers, New Missions, 55.b appointments, other than competitive class appointments, position classifications/reclassifications, traineeships and transition programs to promote the hiring and career advancement of protected class members.

Review of Position Descriptions and Job Qualifications

To assure that representatives of various protected classes have equal opportunity to compete for openings, position descriptions and qualifications required of candidates will be regularly reviewed.

A key point in this process is at the time Department representatives discuss the scope of an Education Department examination with Department of Civil Service staff. Scope conferences include discussions of the wording of qualification standards, providing an opportunity to make changes. Accordingly, the Division of Personnel will routinely notify the appropriate Deputy Commissioner's Program Coordinator as well as the Affirmative Action Officer of scheduled scope conferences.

Whenever an opening occurs or is anticipated, or when an examination for a specific title is scheduled, the appropriate Deputy Commissioner will initiate a review of the position description and qualifications required to determine what revisions if any need to be made.

Qualifications (i.e., knowledge, skills and abilities) will be established which validly enable an incumbent to perform the duties of the position. Experiential and educational criteria must be pertinent to the job at hand and broad enough to allow for competition by representatives of various protected classes. To the extent that physical and mental job requirements for specific titles tend to screen out individuals who have disabilities such qualifications must be validly job-related and necessary for the safe and effective performance of the job. Technical advice regarding job analysis, standard setting, and potential impact on protected classes is available from the Division of Personnel and the Affirmative Action Office.

Revisions identified should be sought immediately. Results of these review and revision efforts should be reported as part of the quarterly affirmative action reporting responsibilities.

In addition, the Affirmative Action Office will coordinate specific reviews of the minimum qualifications set for the noncompetitive and labor class titles listed below. At a rate of reviewing 25 titles per year, the timetable for completing these reviews is March 31, 1988.

Library Aide
Museum Exhibit Technician
Mail and Supply Helper
Bindery Helper
Watchman
Cleaner
Laborer
Maintenance Helper
Window Washer
Building Service Aide
Braille Telephone Operator
Launderer
Senior Launderer
Supervising Garment Worker
Child Care Aide I
Child Care Aide II
Cook
Painter
Head Cook/Housekeeper
Clinical Physician (PT)
Ophthamologist (PT)
Laboratory Worker
Offset Printing Machine Operator
Grounds Worker
Janitor
Motor Vehicle Operator
Museum Attendant
Senior Museum Attendant
Maintenance Assistant
Laborer Supervisor
Senior Chauffeur
Assistant Regents Printer
Bookbinder
Building Guard

Carpenter
Electrician
General Mechanic
Museum Exhibit Assistant Audio Visual Operation and Repair
Plumber and Steamfitter
Secretarial Stenographer
Bindery Shop Supervisor
Education of the Disadvantaged Program Aide
Museum Exhibit Technician (Installation)
Museum Exhibit Technician (Audio Visual Fabrication)
Museum Exhibit Technician (Metal Fabrication)
Museum Exhibit Technician (Wood Construction)
Regents Printer
Specialist in Student Affairs
Museum Exhibit Specialist (Diorama Accessories)
Senior Museum Exhibit Specialist (Photography)
Senior Museum Exhibit Specialist (Restoration)
Senior Museum Exhibit Specialist (Installation)
Senior Museum Exhibit Specialist (Model Making)
Senior Museum Exhibit Specialist (Taxidermy)
Supervising Museum Exhibit Technician (Audio Visual Design)
Senior Museum Exhibit Planner (History)
Senior Museum Exhibit Planner (Natural Science)
Senior Professional Conduct Investigator
Supervising Museum Exhibit Specialist (Photography and Audio Visual Applications)
Supervising Museum Exhibit Specialist (Support Services)
Supervising Museum Exhibit Specialist (Production Art and Illustration)
Supervising Museum Exhibit Specialist (Preparation)
Associate Museum Exhibit Designer
Printing Shop Superintendent
Supervising Museum Exhibit Specialist (Fabrication)
Associate Museum Exhibit Planner (History)
Principal Museum Exhibit Designer
Building Superintendent
Museum Exhibit Publications Editor
Senior Administrative Assistant
Supervising Professional Conduct Investigator
Principal Museum Exhibit Specialist (Production)
Supervising Museum Exhibit Designer
Supervising Museum Exhibit Planner (Natural Science)
Director, School Health Demonstration Program
Associate in Native American Education
Affirmative Action Officer IV
Coordinator of Doctoral Program Review
Museum Exhibit Specialist (Film Production)
Museum Exhibit Specialist (Photography)
Museum Exhibit Specialist (Production Art)
Museum Exhibit Specialist (Restoration)
Museum Exhibit Specialist (Special Effects)
Museum Exhibit Technician (Wood Fabrication)
Regents Night Printer
Secretarial Assistant
Senior Museum Exhibit Technician (Metal Fabrication)
Printing Shop Assistant Superintendent
Senior Museum Exhibit Designer
Senior Museum Exhibit Specialist (Film Production)
Senior Museum Exhibit Specialist (Molded Plastics)
Educator Services Administrative Coordinator
Chief, Historical and Anthropological Services
Chief of Museum Exhibit Design and Production
Chief Scientist (Biology)
Chief Scientist (Geology)
Coordinator of Resource Allocation Plan
Director of Foreign Area Studies
Director of State Science Service
Janitor
Museum Attendant
Museum Instructor (PT)
Supervising Building Service Aide

Examination Activity

To ensure that affirmative action becomes an integral and ongoing element in all of the Department's examination activity, the Affirmative Action and Personnel Offices will immediately begin utilizing the *Affirmative Action Guide for Agency Examination Activity* as the agency procedure for the routine and systematic involvement of the two offices in general examination activity.

Recruitment

In order to provide as much lead time as possible for expanded recruitment, whenever an opening occurs or is anticipated, the appropriate Deputy Commissioner will direct that an analysis be made of the recruitment sources usually contacted in filling that type of position, even if there is routinely an overabundance of self-referrals for this type of employment. Additional sources of protected class referrals should be identified and contact information listed for those sources most likely to refer appropriate protected class representatives. This analysis should be submitted to the Division of Personnel so that when (or if) permission to fill is given, the Division can immediately send notices, application forms, etc. A copy of the analysis should be sent to the Affirmative Action Office.

Internal Recruiting Resources

When any openings occur or are anticipated or when new positions are created, the appropriate Deputy Commissioner will notify the Division of Personnel and the Affirmative Action Office of the potential opportunity. The notice should include title, grade level, qualifications, anticipated date of hire, and a contact person. It is understood that such notices cannot be a guarantee that permission to fill the vacancy has been obtained. However, this procedure will enable staff of these offices to provide appropriate career guidance to interested employees who may make inquiries. It will also enable these offices to refer appropriate protected class candidates for consideration.

Since it has long been the policy of the Department to fill higher graded positions as far as possible by promotion from lower grade levels, managers who have authority to hire or promote will encourage applications from existing staff in order to include protected class employees in the candidate pool wherever possible.

If interested in specific opportunities, employees should not hesitate to make this interest known by submitting a letter directly to the Division of Personnel, expressing the desire to be considered for specific openings.

The Department works closely with the State's Clerical and Secretarial Employee Advancement Program, created as a result of negotiations with the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA), in order to expand bridging opportunities for clerical workers to professional positions. Managers planning to increase staff size or to implement new programs are encouraged to keep bridging in mind and to provide such opportunities when possible. The Division of Personnel provides technical assistance on request.

External Recruiting Resources

The Division of Personnel maintains a comprehensive list of minority group organizations located nationwide, to whom annoucements of vacancies are routinely sent. In addition, depending on the position to be filled, recruitment assistance may be requested from the Department of Civil Service Division of Affirmative Careers, the Department of Social Services Commission for the Blind and Visual Handicapped, as well as our own Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Job Network Information Service.

The Division of Personnel also maintains an Affirmative Action Reference File containing the resumes of protected class individuals who have expressed an interest in working for the Department. The Commissioner has directed that departmental appointing officers review this file when recruiting for Department professional and management openings where there is no existing Civil Service eligible list or for which no list is required (e.g., exempt and consultant positions). (See section on "Affirmative Action Reference File" on next page).

Application Forms

The Affirmative Action Officer has reviewed all pre-employment forms and removed all inappropriate inquiries. All references to protected class status have been removed as well as any illegal inquiries regarding disability, race, sex, marital status, national origin, age, credit rating, etc. Any appropriate changes pursuant to future legislation and/or executive mandate will be made as becomes necessary.

Surveys of Employees

A separate Affirmative Action Survey form is included in the pre- employment process, which asks on a *voluntary* basis for individuals to reveal their ethnic, race, sex, disability or Vietnam veteran's identities to the Affirmative Action Office. This information enables the Affirmative Action Officer to monitor applicant flow and to assure that the application process is carried out equitably. Completed forms are not kept in Personnel files but forwarded to the Affirmative Action Office, where they are kept in confidential files.

At other times during the year, the Affirmative Action Office or the Department of Civil Service Division of Affirmative Careers may distribute surveys requesting similar information. In all cases, responses should be given voluntarily and steps taken to assure confidentiality. Employees will not be punished for not responding. However, willingness to provide this information helps the Department to accurately monitor how effective its efforts are in preventing discrimination and in fostering equal opportunities.

On an annual basis, each employee is given a copy of his or her confidential affirmative action record, and has an opportunity to make corrections or changes.

Anyone having questions about the information collection process is welcome to call the Affirmative Action Office at (518) 473-1265.

Affirmative Action Reference File

Because of their key position, members of the Executive Staff (top 30 officials of the Department below the Commissioner) are primarily responsible for achieving the goals of the Department's Affirmative Action Program. Part of this responsibility involves recommending names of possible candidates for Department positions to be included in a "Reference File" maintained by the Division of Personnel. All members of the Executive Staff are expected to provide names and, when possible, resumes of protected class candidates for Department positions (without reference necessarily to current vacancies) in any branch of the Department. These should be based on professional contacts and not merely word-of-mouth or off-hand recommendations of third parties.

Appointing officers are urged to review the file when considering appointments for which there is no list or for which no list is required, including appointments to consultant positions.

For competitive examinations the Division of Personnel routinely reviews the file and mails announcements to candidates who appear to meet the minimum qualifications.

The resumes are coded by specialty and are available for review in the Division of Personnel, Room 148, Education Building. Photocopies of applicants' resumes are provided after appointing officers determine which resumes will be considered. The total file will not be released from the Division of Personnel.

Advertising

The Department widely advertises its openings for positions, and most of its upper level professional and managerial positions are recruited for on a nationwide basis. In view of limited funds for advertising vacancies, however, it is necessary to apply very rigid cost-effectiveness measures to our expenditures for this purpose. Because we have achieved better affirmative action results from advertising in widely circulated publications and/or professional journals than from advertisements in publications catering to narrow interest groups, we prefer to utilize the former.

Generally speaking, advertisements are placed in selected newspapers and professional journals for positions at the Bureau Chief level and above, while general mailing campaigns are utilized for lower level positions. Managers who become aware of new sources should provide the Division of Personnel with names and addresses so they can be added to the mailing list. Good results have been obtained from advertising, including use of display ads, in the Sunday *New York Times* and other major metropolitan newspapers. It is our practice to label all such advertising with the phrase "Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer."

In order to assure that recruitment efforts attract qualified disabled individuals, advertising will be accessible to those who may have vision, communication or mobility handicaps. Wherever possible we will announce vacancies through the use of radio information services. Public service announcements will have sign inserts or captions, and notices will be posted in physically accessible locations.

The Division of Personnel works closely with operating units in mapping out recruitment campaigns to meet staffing needs and in arranging with appointing officers appropriate affirmative action efforts. It is important that such campaigns and efforts be undertaken as soon as the decision is reached that the vacancy in question may be filled.

Search Committees

Whenever search committees are impanelled to assist with recruiting and selecting candidates, the committee will be selected to be representative of various protected classes. In providing guidance to the committee's purpose, the Department manager involved will apprise members of affirmative action policies and objectives.

Oral Test Rating Boards

Whenever possible, oral test rating boards convened by the Division of Personnel for the determination of eligible candidates for Department positions, include women, disabled persons, minority representatives, and Vietnam Era veterans. Managers assist this process by identifying potential board panelists among their employees and by referring their names to the Division of Personnel.

Unsolicited Applications and Resumes

When identifiable protected class representatives submit completed applications or resumes to Department

Offices, the recipient will forward copies of the resume or application to the Division of Personnel and the Affirmative Action Office. If the recipient finds that the application or resume is relevant to a current or expected opening, the appropriate supervisor will be notified so that an interview of the candidate can be conducted. If the application or resume is not relevant to a current or expected opening, the candidate will be so informed. Copies of resumes and applications will be kept on file for at least six months in the event that openings occur. In either event, a memo to the Affirmative Action Office should explain what action was taken.

Employment Interviewing

The Department's Affirmative Action Policy necessitates that appointing officers be especially alert to the proper conduct of interviewing candidates for possible appointment to vacant positions. The following requirements and guidelines supplement Civil Service Law and Rules and departmental rules and procedures concerning the appointment process, most of which are outlined in the "Administrative Policy Manual," "On the Job" (the Department's personnel handbook for its staff), "Commissioner's Memorandums," and State-employee organization agreements. In addition, individual offices of the Department may have special requirements regarding which officials are required to conduct interviews and approve appointments.

In any case, appointing officials should be guided by the following points in the conduct of employment interviews:

I. Preparation

a. Review the applicant's resume or Application for Employment prior to the interview.

b. Know the requirements of the position.

c. Prepare an outline of the questions that need to be asked of the applicant to help gain insight about his or her qualifications, aptitudes and abilities. This helps ensure that standards for selection are consistent for all interviewees.

d. Remember the questions that may *not* be asked in the interview (see "Unlawful Pre-Employment Inquiries" below).

e. Arrange a time and place for the interview that is comfortable and will allow it to remain uninterrupted.

f. Interviews must be held in places that are accessible to disabled persons, and reasonable accommodations to do so must be made if necessary. The Affirmative Action Office can be contacted for advice when difficulties arise.

II. Conducting the Interview

a. Establish and maintain a friendly, pleasant atmosphere.

b. Listen — really *listen* to the applicant.

c. Gain information through pertinent and appropriate questions.

1. Use your outline and the application to focus questions.

2. Ask for further clarification if information is not complete or is confusing on the application.

3. Don't assume you know what the applicant means. Ask follow-up questions: why, what, when, where and how.

4. Avoid "yes/no" type questions.

d. If you are interested in the applicant, ask him or her for references, especially the names of former supervisors or employers.

e. Give the applicant information about the position you wish to fill.

1. Explain where the position is situated in the organization structure and to whom the incumbent reports.

2. Give a general description of working conditions with specific details about hours of work, overtime, travel (if any), production standards, etc.

3. Give an honest estimate about promotion or career opportunities.

4. Give the applicant an opportunity to ask questions.

III. Closing the Interview

a. Inform the applicant when he/she can expect to hear from you. (As a general rule, it is not advisable to make an immediate job offer unless you have made a prior reference check and/or you personally know the applicant and have made the decision that he or she is the best qualified.)

b. If it is obvious that the individual does not meet the requirements of the position, indicate this to the applicant and, if possible, suggest other types of positions that he/she might consider.

IV. Evaluation

a. Summarize your impressions of the applicant immediately following the interview for future references.

b. Make a reference check either by personally telephoning individuals submitted as references by the applicant or asking the Personnel Office to do so. (As a general rule, we do not recommend that written references, including college placement files, be relied upon.)

V. Unlawful Pre-Employment Inquiries

a. Birthplace of applicant.

b. Birthplace of applicant's parents, spouse or other relatives.

c. Applicant's religious affiliation, religious holidays observed or attendance at religious services.

d. Any questions directly or indirectly seeking indication of race or color, including complexion or color of skin.

e. Asking for a photograph of applicant.

f. Applicant's nationality, national origin, descent or parentage.

g. Marital status of applicant or information on spouse or other family members, including children.

h. Arrangements for child care.

i. Questions about physical or mental disabilities unless the Personnel Office has specifically authorized certain such questions in advance of interviews for a specific job-related function (e.g., physical ability to lift heavy objects required of a Laborer).

j. Arrest record.

As a general rule, you should ask the same questions of every applicant, making no distinctions in this regard because of age, sex, race or handicapping condition.

Medical Examinations/Standards

In those limited instances where pre-employment medical examinations are necessary to confirm the presence of bona fide occupational qualifications, the Personnel and Affirmative Action Offices shall ensure that pre-employment medical examinations meet the following criteria:

—That a conditional offer of employment is made
—That all employees or prospective employees take such examinations
—That any information regarding disability is kept confidential.

Appointment Monitoring

Consistent with Department policy of giving deliberate consideration to protected class representatives without establishing quotas, departmental appointing officers are required to provide the Division of Personnel and the Affirmative Action office specific information concerning recruitment, placement and promotion activities for minority representatives, women, Vietnam Era Veterans, and people having disabilities.

Competitive Appointments

In the case of appointments from Civil Service eligible lists to either permanent or temporary openings, the Division of Personnel and the Affirmative Action Office expect an explanation whenever a minority group eligible is passed over or whenever an eligible who is a woman is passed over to appoint a man. The same requirement will be imposed for an eligible who is a Vietnam Era Veteran or who is disabled and passed over if the Department is aware of the existence of veteran status

or the disability. "Passed over" means not selecting a protected class eligible who is among the top three candidates on a list of those interested in appointment. Such explanation should indicate the strengths and weaknesses of *all* the available candidates reachable for appointment. These explanations will be kept confidential in the Division of Personnel and in the Affirmative Action Office. *The lack of a satisfactory explanation can result in a disapproval of the recommended appointment.*

Enforcement of this requirement is a shared responsibility of departmental appointing officials and the Division of Personnel. When lists are certified by the Division of Personnel to appointing officials, staff involved in this process are frequently unaware of the racial make-up of the eligibles or whether some of the eligibles may be disabled. Sometimes it is not even possible to discern the sex of an eligible solely from the person's name on the eligible list. Thus, this information becomes known in most cases during the interview process. If an appointing official believes the appointment of the best qualified candidate requires that a known protected class candidate must be passed over, the official should be able to justify such a recommendation on the basis of the job requirements and the relative skills and backgrounds of the eligible candidates. This justification should be immediately submitted to the Division of Personnel and the Affirmative Action Office before the appointment is confirmed with the candidate of choice.

Other Appointments

In the case of all other appointments where a Civil Service eligible list is *not* required (e.g., short-term temporary appointments, noncompetitive or labor class appointments, provisional appointments necessitated by exhausted eligible lists, n.s. appointments, etc.) appointing officers must be able to demonstrate that a significant effort was made to attract protected class candidates. Appointing officers are encouraged to review the "Affirmative Action Reference File" in this regard, and to develop recruitment sources from among organizations representing protected classes.

When the final candidate is selected, a memo to the Division of Personnel and to the Affirmative Action Office should:

1. Describe efforts made to attract protected class candidates
2. List all eligibles, identifying on this list known protected class candidates
3. Justify the selection of a finalist who is not a protected class representative, through comparison of the finalist's relative skills and background with the job requirements as well as with the skills and backgrounds of known protected class eligibles who were not selected.

This justification should be immediately submitted before the appointment is confirmed with the candidate of choice. *The lack of a satisfactory explanation can result in disapproval of the recomended appointment.*

Separations: Transfers, Terminations, Resignations and Layoffs

Personnel actions resulting in protected class employees leaving the Department will be reviewed by the Affirmative Action Office before becoming final.

When such actions involve known disabled employees, the Affirmative Action Officer will investigate the situation as soon as possible to ascertain that such separation is not attributable to the failure or unwillingness to provide reasonable accommodations.

Whenever protected class individuals are faced with possible layoff the Personnel and/or the Administrative Officer will work, in conjunction with the Affirmative Action Officer, to develop the agency reduction in force plan and recommend actions to aid in the retention of protected class employees. The Education Department will utilize 55.b appointments when possible to maintain continuity of employment for known disabled employees.

Exit Audits and Interviews

The Affirmative Action and Personnel Offices will conduct an exit audit whenever any protected class member leaves the agency. An exit interview will be conducted when one or more of the following conditions prevail:

—Whenever a separation involves a known disabled employee (in such a case, accommodations required and provided to the employee must be evaluated)
—Whenever the result of an exit audit indicates that an affirmative action problem may exist.

Demotion and Disciplinary Actions

The Personnel or Employee Relations Office will inform the Affirmative Action Office of situations where demotions or disciplinary actions are being considered against protected class members. The Affirmative Action Officer will review and thoroughly investigate all such notices. For disabled employees, accommodations required and provided will be carefully analyzed in the review.

Counseling

Protected class employees having difficulty in job performance will be afforded the opportunity to be counseled prior to any unfavorable employment action being taken. Supervisors/managers will contact the Division of Personnel or the Affirmative Action Officer to assist in the provision of such counseling.

Career Development

Protected class employees will be encouraged and given every opportunity to participate in training and career mobility opportunities.

The Training Section and Affirmative Action Office will work together:

—to ensure that no protected class member is denied participation based on his/her protected class status or need for reasonable accommodations
—to make training sites and programs accessible in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
—to make all supervisors aware of their responsibility to fairly nominate employees for training
—to make protected class employees aware of training opportunities available
—to develop procedures that will monitor training participation and nomination for equity.

Pages 28 and 29 of *On The Job*, the Education Department's handbook on personnel policies and regulations, summarize employee training policies and opportunities. All employees, clerical as well as professional and managerial, are encouraged to participate. Training section staff can provide guidance on course selection and available funding.

One important factor contributing to employee advancement is the receipt of special project or task force chairing assignments which arise as part of any operating unit's normal routine. Special assignments such as these give a designee the opportunity to develop leadership and organizational skills, to learn how other areas of the Department function, and to find ways of coping with the pressures of meeting deadlines which are solely the designee's responsibility. Such opportunities collectively comprise an informal management development "program." When internal job advancement opportunities arise, the individuals selected are typically those who have most often come through in times of need. In order to enhance the upward mobility of protected class employees, therefore, managers who control special project and committee chair assignments will regularly designate protected class employees for such assignments. Reports of such mentoring activities will be included in the quarterly affirmative action report.

Employees who have disabilities requiring reasonable accommodations in training or career development activities should bring their needs to the attention of their supervisors or the training program staff as much ahead of time as possible, so that accommodations can be planned for. All training announcements include an invitation to people who need accommodations to make their needs known to the Training Section. Individuals will not be denied the opportunity to participate because of their need for reasonable accommodations.

Leave Policies

Leave policies including education leave, sick leave, special leaves with pay, parenting leaves, and leaves without pay are discussed in detail on pages 18–24 of the Department's handbook on personnel policies and regulations, entitled, *On The Job*. It is the policy of the Education Department to treat all requests for leave in an objective and nondiscriminatory manner.

Performance Evaluations (see also Part VI)

The Personnel and Affirmative Action Officers will ensure that supervisors conducting performance evaluations are briefed on how to evaluate the work performance of all employees in an objective, nondiscriminatory manner.

Supervisors and managers will be advised that Affirmative Action compliance will be included as a criterion in their performance appraisals. A review of perfor-

mance evaluation results will be conducted to determine their objectivity, fairness and effectiveness.

Factors utilized in this review include but are not limited to the following:

—dispersion of protected class employees' ratings in relation to the work force demographics
—number of protected class employees making rating decisions
—number of appeals upheld/denied and demographics of the same
—trends in ratings of protected class employees in comparison to non-protected class employees.

Quality of Work Life

The Department will explore the ways in which Department and statewide policies designed to improve the quality of work life are connected to affirmative action efforts. Some areas for exploration include:

—sexual harassment policies (see Executive Order 19)
—sexual preference issues (see Executive Order 28)
—flexible and part-time work opportunities (see Executive Order 68)
—Employee Assistance Programs.

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policies in areas other than Employment

The Department will study equal opportunity/affirmative action policies not directly related to employment to determine how they intersect with and affect the implementation of this Affirmative Action Plan. This study will include the following:

—mandates for increased utilization of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises in agency contracts (see Executive Order 21)
—requirements of Federal agencies and other funding sources
—requirements affecting private sector, educational or other governmental institutions
—policies concerning equal opportunity/affirmative action in provision of services to the public and/or client populations
—policies affecting relationships with community-based organizations and other groups representing the interests of protected class members.

Informal Policies and Practices

The Education Department recognizes that informal policies and practices are not part of its official decision-making structure; however, informal policies often determine how formal rules are implemented.

While it is difficult to identify and correct these informal procedures, it is imperative that their existence be acknowledged and considered in the Affirmative Action Plan. All employees in the Education Department have a responsibility to examine any informal procedure in which they participate, for example:

—In the face of a viable recruitment plan, are vacancies still filled via word of mouth?
—Do managers/supervisors pass over protected class employees to select employees with whom they personally identify for promotion opportunities or special career enhancing training or assignments?
—Are small numbers of protected class individuals hired to fill highly visible positions which lack organizational credibility?
—Do interviewers informally discourage potential protected class eligibles when attempting to reach a "favorite son"?

PART V

Vietnam Era Veterans

A. Policy Statement

Vietnam Era Veterans are a protected class and are due the same considerations as the other protected classes under the Education Department's Affirmative Action Program. Therefore, all the policies and procedures outlined in this plan apply to Vietnam Era Veterans as well as to the other protected classes.

This Department will take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment Vietnam Era Veterans. Such action applies to employment practices, including, but not limited to, the following:

Hiring, promotion, demotion, transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, as well as selection for training.

The Department will comply with the Department of Civil Service requirements for the collection and maintenance of information on all employees who meet the definition of Vietnam Era Veterans.

Efforts will be made to assure that Vietnam Era Veterans will be represented on all committees which deal with employment practices and policies: e.g., Affirmative Action Advisory Committee, search/selection committees, grievance and appeal committees.

B. Definition

For the purpose of compliance with this policy, a Vietnam Era Veteran is considered to be:

Any person who served on active duty, in the Armed Forces of the U.S., any part of which occurred between January 1, 1963 and May 7, 1975 and was discharged or released with other than dishonorable discharge.

A member of the National Guard or Reserve component of the Armed Forces cannot be afforded the preference unless the service resulted from a federalization of the Guard or the Reserve duty was for other than training purposes.

NOTE: An individual may not be eligible for veteran's credits for examination and certain seniority purposes under New York State Law unless he or she was a resident of New York State at the time of entry into service and received an honorable discharge or was discharged under honorable circumstances. However, consideration under the Affirmative Action Plan is independent of veteran's credits.

C. Recruitment Sources

The Department will seek to recruit Vietnam Era Veterans from organizations, institutions and agencies such as those listed:

—The Veterans Employment Representative or designee in the Job Service Office nearest to the facility or office where hiring takes place

—The Veterans Administration Regional Office nearest to the office or facility

—The Office of the Division of Veterans Affairs nearest each establishment where hiring takes place

—The service officers of the national veterans groups active in the areas where recruitment is taking place

—Local veterans groups and veterans service centers in the areas servicing each establishment.

D. Referral to Services

The agency snall refer Vietnam Era Veterans to appropriate social and human services organizations, institutions and agencies as needed.

PART VI

Persons With Disabilities

Policy Statement

The State Education Department will take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified disabled individuals. Such action applies to employment practices including but not limited to the following:

Hiring, promotion, demotion, transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, as well as selection for training.

While applicants and employees who have disabilities are one of the protected classes included under the provisions of the main body of this Affirmative Action Plan, this section addresses additional concerns unique to the affirmative action efforts for people who have disabilities.

The State Education Department's Affirmative Action Office will be pleased to assist covered applicants or employees or any managers who need advice regarding the specific ways that the Affirmative Action Plan affects disabled persons. If there are questions regarding the policy on employment of disabled individuals, contact the Affirmative Action Officer in Albany at (518) 473-1265.

Who is Covered Generally?

For purposes of coverage under this Affirmative Action Plan a disabled individual is one who a) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, b) has a record of such impairment, or c) is regarded as having such an impairment. The term "substantially limits" means the degree to which the impairment affects employability. A disabled individual who is likely to experience difficulty in securing, retaining, or advancing in employment will be considered substantially limited. This Affirmative Action Plan is focused on those people who are qualified disabled persons, i.e., those who with or without reasonable accommodations, can perform the essential functions of the job in question.

Identification of Covered Individuals

In order to identify those Department employees and applicants who might qualify for assistance under this part of the plan, the Department will annually request employees to identify themselves as having disabilities consistent with the definition above. As new appointments are made during the year, the appointees will also be asked to indicate whether they have disabilities.

Under all circumstances self-identification is to be made voluntarily. There will be no adverse treatment if an individual chooses not to. Any information regarding individuals' disabilities will be kept in confidential files in the Affirmative Action Office. These files are separate from Personnel files.

With the consent of the employee, disclosure may be made: to supervisors and managers if reasonable accommodations or work restrictions are needed, to first aid and safety personnel if the conditions require emergency treatment, or to monitoring or investigatory authorities. The employee or applicant having the disability may see his or her own file. Anyone whose responsibilities require knowledge of the employee's disability will also treat such knowledge with confidentiality.

Recruitment

Recruitment sources will include agencies serving disabled individuals and organizations comprised of individuals who have various disabilities. The Department of Civil Service Special Services Unit has resources upon which managers can call, i.e., the Field Recruitment Unit, as well as those staff who implement Section 55-b of Civil Service Law. Agencies and community organizations who will be routinely notified of Department openings include the:

NYS Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
Affirmative Action Coordinator — Room 1908
99 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12234

NYS Commission for the Blind & Visually Handicapped
c/o NYS Dept. of Social Services
40 North Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12243

In local communities, contacts will be made with organizations such as:

—Association for Retarded Children
—Disabled American Veterans
—Easter Seal Society
—Epilepsy Foundation
—Mental Health Association
—United Cerebral Palsy

Reasonable Accommodations

If it is determined that an applicant is qualified to perform the essential functions of the job in question with some accommodations, such accommodation will be provided within reason. A qualified candidate will not be rejected for appointment solely because some reasonable accommodation needs to be made to physical or mental limitations of the individual. If an applicant or employee cannot perform the job duties required even with accommodation, the agency is not required to employ the individual in that assignment.

Reasonable accommodations might include but are not limited to: alternative work schedules, rearrangement of office furniture, providing adaptive equipment such as a telephone amplifier or enlarging device, reader or sign language assistance, special parking, and other architectural modifications.

Issues of architectural accommodations can best be dealt with if original site locations take this into account. Therefore, whenever offices are moved or newly opened, the Affirmative Action Officer will be asked for input on accessibility by the Division of Business Management Services.

Reasonable accommodations may need to be provided by managers to new employees as well as to employees already on staff. Reasonable accommodations may be needed to assist with normal work routines, as well as in-service training or staff meetings, supervision meetings, reassignments, transfers, promotions and in other employment activities.

Assuring reasonable accommodations is a shared responsibility. It is important for employees who require some type of reasonable accommodations to make sure that new managers know what accommodations have been provided in the past, with enough advance notice so that they can continue to be provided.

In addition to arranging reasonable accommodations, managers should also take responsibility to see that information about accommodations provided, or considered but not provided, are recorded in the Affirmative Action Office. This will provide a resource for training or management staff to refer to in the future for information regarding reasonable accommodations which need to follow with the employee as new employment situations or training arise.

Performance Evaluation

Supervisors who conduct performance evaluations need to properly evaluate the work performance of workers who have disabilities, in order to avoid situations such as the following: a) giving the impression that the handicap is the reason for discipline or discharge of the employee when the real issue is poor work performance; b) criticizing the individual for poor work performance when the absence of a workable reasonable accommodation is a contributing factor, and c) expecting less of an individual having a disability than is expected of other workers with equal titles while overrating the employee's performance.

Retention of Workers who Become Disabled

The Department will make every effort to retain employees who acquire disabilities while in service of the Education Department. Before employees are terminated for reasons of disability, the Affirmative Action Officer and the Personnel Office should be informed. Every alternative should be examined before the employee leaves service. Given enough notice, it may be possible to provide support services, informational counseling, referral to needed resources, transfer or reassignment, or it may be possible to obtain coverage under Section 55-b of Civil Service Law. Consideration should be given to training for those employees who acquire disabilities, if such training would permit retention.

Complaint Procedure

Applicants and employees who are disabled can utilize the complaint procedures described elsewhere in the plan for protected classes. See Chapter VII "Dis-

crimination Complaint Procedures." The Affirmative Action Officer plays a key role in this issue and should be contacted if any questions arise.

Section 504 Compliance

Compliance with the requirements of Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, is an integral part of our agency affirmative action efforts. The provisions of Section 504 require that the State Education Department, as a Federal funding recipient, may not discriminate in its employment practices nor in its delivery of programs and services, against qualified handicapped individuals.

Pursuant to the regulations, our 504 Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan was completed in June 1978 and filed with New York State Division of the Budget. Since responsibility within New York State was recently transferred from the Division of the Budget to the Office of Advocate for the Disabled, a copy of this plan was refiled with the Advocate's Office in July 1982.

The Affirmative Action Officer coordinates 504 Compliance for this Department. Anyone having questions or concerns relating to this issue, should call (518) 473-1265 or write the Affirmative Action Officer at the Education Building, Room 152, Albany, New York 12234.

PART VIa

Sexual Harrassment Policy

Sexual harassment in the workplace is not merely an offensive condition; it is against the law. Like harassment on the basis of color, race, religion, age, national origin or disability, sexual harassment is discrimination. Discrimination on the basis of gender is a violation of both Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the New York State Human Rights Law.

Effective November 10, 1980, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission issued guidelines designed to eliminate instances of sexual harassment in the workplace. In accordance with these guidelines, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature will constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to the conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment; or

2. Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for an employment decision affecting the person rejecting or submitting to the conduct; or

3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an affected person's work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Every State Education Department employee is entitled to a working environment free from sexual harassment. It has no place in the workplace. Ignoring the problem is tolerating the problem, and the State is determined that harassment of any sort will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment is considered to be a form of misconduct, and sanctions will be enforced against supervisory and managerial personnel who knowingly allow such behavior to exist in the workplace as well as against those persons guilty of such misbehavior.

Complaints of sexual harassment may be made orally or in writing to:

Affirmative Action Officer
Education Building, Room 152 EB
Albany, New York 12234
Phone (518) 473-1265

The Affirmative Action Office is responsible for processing complaints. Confidential investigations will be conducted and complainants will be informed of various administrative and legal remedies. The complaint process provides for follow-up to determine if the sexual harassment has been effectively stopped.

PART VII

Discrimination Complaint Procedure

I. Introduction

Equality of opportunity is a civil right in the State of New York under the provision of Article 15 of the New York State Human Rights Law. Every employee and applicant for employment has the right to seek employment opportunities in a climate that is free from restraint and intimidation, harassment, coercement or exclusion. Pursuant to the promulgation of the Planning Guidelines to achieve Equal Opportunity in New York State through Affirmative Action under Executive Order 6, this complaint procedure has been devised to provide for uniformity and equity in the resolution of allegations of discrimination in employment.

An abbreviated version of this procedure appears in the administrative policy manual of the New York State Education Department and "On the Job," the Employee Handbook for the New York State Education Department.

II. Purpose

This procedure has been designed for the resolution of complaints internally. It is in no way intended to duplicate or circumvent options available to claimants through:

1. Employee organizations
2. The New York State Division of Human Rights
3. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
4. The U.S. Justice Department Office of Civil Rights
5. Any other regulating agencies as may be appropriate
6. The judicial system.

Use of this procedure will not suspend any statute of limitations otherwise set by law, rule or regulation. This procedure applies to all complaints of discrimination in employment based on race, color, national origin, creed, age, sex, marital status, religion, mental or physical disabilities, arrest record, criminal conviction, or Vietnam Era Veteran status.

It may be used by any employee or applicant for employment. Complaints may be based on any alleged act or omission in the nature of discrimination including but not limited to:

Interviewing, hiring, dismissal, discipline, performance evaluation, job assignment, training opportunities, shift assignment, promotion, transfer, working condition, harassment (race, sex, color, national origin, etc.) agency policies and other terms or conditions of employment.

Each employee may be represented by an agent of his or her employee organization, in the event that the complaint involves a possible violation of contract.

III. Definitions

Discrimination

Unlawful consideration or treatment of a person or group, (either intentional or unintentional) based on race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, marital status, religion, mental or physical disabilities, arrest record, criminal conviction or veteran status.

Discrimination in Employment

1. Where the failure or refusal to hire, promote or train any qualified individual or otherwise treat equally with the respect to compensation, terms and conditions or privileges of employment would not have occurred but for race, color, creed, national origin, sex, religion, marital status, age, disability, veteran status, criminal conviction, or arrest record.

2. To limit, segregate or classify employees in such a way as to deprive or tend to deprive an otherwise qualified individual of employment opportunities solely on the basis of a person's race, color, creed, national origin, sex, religion, marital status, age, disability, veterans status or criminal conviction, or arrest record.

IV. Responsibility

a) *Commissioner of Education*

The Commissioner of Education has the responsibility for the adoption and implementation of this complaint procedure and for assuring that sufficient staff is assigned and trained to properly carry it out. In the event that it is determined that a person has been subjected to an unlawful act of discrimination, the Commissioner shall issue instructions for remedial action including disciplinary action where appropriate.

b) *Affirmative Action Officer*

The Affirmative Action Officer is responsible for coordinating complaint proceedings. This may include counseling complainants, performing or delegating investigations and informing complainants of their right to file complaints with other entities.

c) *Designees*

In order to expedite the prompt investigation of complaints, the responsibility for complaint handling activities may be delegated to a person or persons in the same geographical region as the claimant. The delegated activities may include counseling, conciliation and investigation.

Staff will be trained to conduct confidential investigations. To assure that equity and consistency prevail, the Affirmative Action Officer will direct the investigation and must be consulted before any conciliation or remedy is made final.

V. Discrimination Complaint Procedure

A. The Process

a) Any person with a complaint of discrimination should contact the Affirmative Action Officer or the appropriate designee within 60 working days of the occurrence of the event which has given rise to the complaint. If the 60 working day filing deadline is missed because of circumstances beyond the complainant's control, an extension of up to one year can be granted by the Affirmative Action Officer as she/he deems reasonable.

b) The Affirmative Action Officer or designee will advise the complainant, counsel if necessary, explain the internal procedure, explain the other options available to the employee and assist in completing a complaint form.

c) The Affirmative Action Officer or designee will interview the complainant and study relevant documents.

d) The Affirmative Action Officer or designee will interview witnesses and further investigate the situation. At each opportunity, the Affirmative Action Officer will seek conciliation or informal settlement that is satisfactory to the parties concerned. The Affirmative Action Officer is responsible for investigating the feasibility and legality of any remedies that are proposed with the agency counsel, employee relations officer and the personnel officer as it appears necessary.

e) When the investigation is completed the Affirmative Action Officer prepares a report including recommendation to the Commissioner of Education.

f) The Commissioner of Education issues the final decision and recommendations to the parties concerned.

g) The decision of the Commissioner of Education is the final level of departmental review.

The complainant may at any point in the process withdraw the charge using a withdrawal form available in the Affirmative Action Office.

B. Time Frames

In most cases, as explained in A (a) above, the complainant should notify the Affirmative Action Officer or the appropriate designee within 60 days of the occurrence of the problem situation. The Department of Education has 60 working days to reach a decision beginning from the date on which a written complaint is received.

C. Confidentiality

With the exception of giving evidence, and answering inquiries during the investigation, the substance of the investigation will remain confidential. No party, staff member or designee should disclose the results of an investigation or the parts thereof.

D. Accessibility

Assistance will be available to complainants who need assistance in order to understand and participate in the complaint process. This may include sign language interpreters, wheelchair attendants, braille copiers, sound amplification equipment or foreign language interpreters.

E. Retaliation

Employees who avail themselves of this procedure may do so without fear of retaliation. It should be clear that retaliation against an individual who has filed a discrimination complaint will result in disciplinary action.

F. Time Accruals

There will be no charge to leave accruals of those employees who take time in conjunction with complaint investigations.

G. Outcomes

The outcome of an investigation is either a dismissal of the claim or remedial action. In the event of dismissal, the Department of Civil Service will be notified of the outcome through the quarterly report process. However, if remedial action is in order, any of the following avenues may be pursued consistent with the Civil Service Law, Rules and Regulations:

1. Placement of a person in a position that the individual would have been entitled to had the discriminatory practice not occurred
2. Promotion of a person who was refused advancement because of a discriminatory circumstance
3. Hiring a person who was refused employment because of a discriminatory circumstance
4. Disciplinary action against a respondent in accordance with the appropriate employment agreement or regulations.

Where removing or correcting a condition found to be a continuing cause of discriminatory action does not involve the application of the Civil Service Law, such action may be taken consistent with law or any controlling negotiating agreement. This is not an exhaustive list of possible remedies; each case will be judged on its own merit.

Individuals appointed as a result of discriminatory practice will not be penalized.

H. Follow-up

The Affirmative Action Officer will maintain a file of complaints received. Six weeks from the date of the decision the Affirmative Action Officer will determine whether the Commissioner of Education's directives have been carried out, whether employees are in a good environment or whether the case needs to be reopened. The findings will be reported to the Commissioner of Education.

I. Record Keeping

A record of the status and determination of all complaints will be maintained for at least two years. Cases that are unresolved are subject to external reviews, and will be maintained indefinitely or until they are resolved. Records of complaints will be kept exclusively in either the Affirmative Action Office or the Office of Counsel.

J. Forms related to the discrimination complaint procedure are available in the Affirmative Action Office.

PART VIII

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Training

In order for our affirmative action program to be most successful, a climate of cooperation and awareness must exist at all levels. Managers and supervisors need the skills to develop and manage a widely representative, productive work force. All employees need to be informed of their rights and responsibilities under Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity mandates. The Commissioner has directed that training in affirmative action/equal opportunity concepts and topics be an integral component of this Department's employee training and development program.

The objectives are to reach all employees and to accomplish the following:

—Expand knowledge of affirmative action/equal opportunity legal process as it applies to the work environment

—Increase employee understanding of the need for affirmative action

—Increase employee support for affirmative action plan implementation in the Department

—Increase interpersonal acceptance and sensitivity toward affirmative action issues as they apply to the workplace.

By using various approaches, we strive to ultimately provide each employee with basic training in the following topics:

—Historical and legal background

—Affirmative action issues and concepts

—Terms of the Department's plan

—Strategies for implementation, including how to overcome major obstacles

—Awareness of attitudes and values and how these affect understanding of affirmative action/equal opportunity expectations

—The individual employee's responsibility for affirmative action/equal opportunity.

Orientation of New Employees

Orientation sessions for new Department employees include an introduction to affirmative action concepts, specifically the terms of our Department's Affirmative Action Plan. In field offices, each manager charged with orienting new employees has the responsibility to assure that each new employee has received a copy of the plan and understands his or her rights and responsibilities under it.

The "Orientation for New Managers" program includes a briefing on manager responsibilities under the Department's Affirmative Action Plan. In addition, in order to successfully complete probation, newly appointed or promoted managers (at MI level and above) must demonstrate rudimentary knowledge of EEO law and related personnel issues, as assessed either by the computerized self-test in EEO available through the Training Section or by an equivalent assessment approved by the Affirmative Action Office.

Probationary managers will be provided every opportunity to read and study relevant material available in the Training Section or in the Affirmative Action Office. On successfully demonstrating knowledge of EEO law and related personnel issues, the probationer will be given a certificate to attach to the next probation report to attest to completion of this criterion.

Continuous Training Program

The Affirmative Action Office and the Department's Training Section have a leadership role in annually producing at least one Department-wide training presentation on affirmative action/equal opportunity issues, such as those listed under "Priorities" below. Attendees will be invited from each of the five areas of the Department on the basis of membership in the target staff groupings listed on the next page.

Additionally, on an annual basis, the Deputy Commissioner in each of the five major areas of the Department will produce at least one internal presentation for his or her respective area. The topic for an area should be selected on the basis of affirmative action/equal employment issues which are of priority concern to that

area. Examples might include service access issues, sexual harassment, management strategies, and so on.

In order to coordinate efforts, the content should be developed in conjunction with the Affirmative Action Office and the Department's Training Section, which are available for technical assistance.

Target Groups for Continuous Training and Curricular Priorities

The schedule for presenting topics will be determined based on needs identified through ongoing monitoring of affirmative action efforts in the Department. The audience will be identified similarly.

As a place to start, the following groupings of staff and topics of training are suggested:

Target Staff Groupings	Training Focus
Executive Staff	Policy Leadership Strategies
Personnel, Training and Labor Relations Staff	Communicating Affirmative Employment Practices
Middle Managers	Policy Leadership Strategies Managing an Integrated Work force
First Level Supervisors	Managing Integrated Work force
Employee Advocates (Advisory Councils, AA Committees, Union Representatives)	Employee Rights and Recourses
Professionals and Paraprofessionals	Service Delivery Issues
Technicians, Skilled Craft, Service Maintenance and Clerical Workers	Employee Rights and Recourses Working in an Integrated Work force.

Planning and Reporting on Continuous Training

The annual affirmative action report, which is due to be published each March 1, includes a section on "Training Employees in Affirmative Action," in which each projected affirmative action/equal opportunity presentation for the coming year will be described. Descriptions will include a statement of objectives, content, anticipated audience, and estimated date of presentation. (See also,"Annual Report," p. 27.)

After the presentation has occured, results of the training, including a list of attendees will be reported to the Training Section, which will consolidate necessary information for the quarterly affirmative action report.

Resources

A variety of resources exist in this Department which managers may call on for assistance in planning or carrying out training. Expertise is available from the following:

Affirmative Action Office
Department Training Section
Division of Civil Rights and Intercultural Relations
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
Native American Education Unit
Bureau of Veterans Education
Bureau of Bilingual Education
Commissioner's Task Force on Equal Opportunity for Women
Affirmative Action Advisory Committee

Community-based and professional organizations representing various protected classes are often willing to provide inservice training at little or no cost.

In addition, throughout the year, there are dates or periods of time designated to commemorate the special contributions of protected class groups or individuals. At these times various community events are scheduled, and can offer educational opportunities. Significant dates include the following:

January:	Martin Luther King's Birthday
February:	Black History Month
March:	Women's History Week
September:	Hispanic Heritage Week
October:	National Employ the Handicapped Week
November:	Veteran's Day

PART VIIIa

Program Evaluation and Reporting

Evaluative data are collected by the Affirmative Action Office from a variety of sources, collated and analyzed, and reported to top management of the Department on a quarterly, annual, and special needs basis. The purpose is to review progress and problems, to disseminate information about successful or unsuccessful strategies, and to indicate the need for changes in policy or action to overcome obstacles to progress. These data also provide bases for determining what the affirmative action rating should be on managers' performance evaluations.

Quarterly Statistical Analyses

On a quarterly basis, sex and ethnic representation in various occupational categories are statistically analyzed for offices within each of the five major areas. Comparison if made with baseline data from January 1985, and with intermediate goals projected annually toward final goals which should be accomplished by January 1990. When goals are not acheived, further examination of personnel transactions and practices can be undertaken to determine where problems may be occurring.

At this writing, presence of disabled veterans, of Vietnam Era veterans, and of disabled individuals (veteran, or nonveteran) cannot be determined via the confidential computerized affirmative action rosters. When this information is available, it will be included in analysis.

Quarterly and Annual Narrative Reporting

Quarterly and annual narrative reports are obtained by the Affirmative Action Office from managers in each of the five main areas of the Department. These reports include descriptions of recruiting, training and other activities not observable from statistical data. The reports also describe obstacles, and the strategies being applied to overcome them.

Affirmative Action Committee

As described earlier in this plan, the Affirmative Action Committee includes protected class employees from various Department areas. The committee meets quarterly to review report information and to make recommendations for policy, procedures, or strategies which are expected to improve the affirmative action effort.

Random Compliance Auditing

At the discretion of the Affirmative Action Officer and with the approval of the Commissioner, random audits of various offices and personnel practices are undertaken. Audits follow procedures similar to those of external monitoring authorities in order to be comprehensive. Results of these audits are shared with the Commissioner, the appropriate Deputy, and the manager of the office audited. Audit reports include an evaluation of:

—extent of compliance with State and Federal mandates
—extent of compliance with the Department's Affirmative Action Plan
—identification of problem areas and successes
—recommendation for improvement, reward, or negative sanction.

Critical Incidents and Issues

Through liaison with interested community groups or individuals, and through the investigation and resolution of affirmative action/equal opportunity complaints, the Affirmative Action Office becomes an observer of critical incidents and key issues not clearly reflected by other sources of data.

PART IX

Annual Report On Agency Affirmative Action Activities

To reduce printing costs, the annual report is not included in this publication. Separate copies are available, however, in the Affirmative Action Office, Room 152, Education Building, Albany, New York 12234.